

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:271
ANSWERED ON:13.12.2011
INFRASTRUCTURE IN NORTH-EASTERN REGION
Singh Shri Dhananjay

Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has recently assessed the requirement of infrastructural projects in each of the North- Eastern States in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the key infrastructural growth projects Centrally funded in each of these States;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to increase the inter-connectivity amongst these States in view of the recent economic blockade in Manipur;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to provide better connectivity with the rest of the country to improve trade and commerce in these States?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION(SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR)

(a)to(f) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO 271 RAISED BY SHRI DHANANJAY SINGH, M.P. FOR 13TH DECEMBER 2011, REGARDING "INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE NORTH-EASTERN REGION".

(a)&(b) The assessment of the requirement of infrastructural projects in each of the North- Eastern States and the Region is a continuous and evolving planning and policy formulation exercise. It inter-alia involves consultation and participation of State Governments, Union Government, its agencies and other stakeholders. As part of this endeavour, the North Eastern Council, the regional planning body for the NER, prepared "North Eastern Region - Vision 2020" document that was formally released by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 2nd July 2008. The Vision document sets up the goals, identifies the challenges and suggests regional and sectoral implementation strategies for promoting the socio-economic prosperity of the region, with a view to growth rates in the North-East Region catching up with the overall national growth rates.

(c) The details of key infrastructural Centrally funded projects in the N.E. Region are available on the website of this Ministry at www.mdoner.gov.in.

(d)to(f) Regarding the recent blockade in Manipur, it has been informed by the Ministry of Home Affairs that NH-2 (earlier NH-39) is prone to frequent bandhs and economic blockades. Therefore, urgent strengthening of NH-37 (earlier NH-53) between Imphal and Badarpur, as an alternative highway, has become essential. This is in order to reduce the vulnerabilities and blunt the capabilities of militant groups to block supplies of essential commodities to Manipur. Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), in its meeting held on 19th October, 2010, has approved continued maintenance and development of NH-37, along with its associated works, by BRO. This is regularly monitored by Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Ministries of Road Transport & Highways, Railways, Civil Aviation, and Shipping have taken special efforts and region specific flagship programmes to improve inter-connectivity amongst the NE States and their connectivity with rest of the country. The steps taken/proposed by the Union Government are given below -

Road Transport and Highways:

The major road construction/upgradation projects for NER are - Special Accelerated Road Development Programme for North East (SARDP-NE) and National Highway Development Projects (NHDP). The construction of East West Corridor from Porbandhar to Silchar is part of NHDP Phase II. The objectives of SARDP-NE are as follows:-

- (i) Four-lane connectivity on important National Highways in NER.

(ii) Improving other National Highways in NER to 2-lane standard

(iii) Connecting all district headquarters of North Eastern Region to the nearest National Highway by 2-lane road.

(iv) Trans Arunachal Highway to facilitate travel in Arunachal Pradesh without crossing over from Assam.

Railways:

Strengthening of rail infrastructure in the North Eastern Region has been given priority by the Ministry of Railways. With a view to strengthen the rail infrastructure, nine new lines and two gauge conversion projects have been taken up as national projects. For timely completion of national projects and adequate funding, the Ministry of Railways has set up non-lapsable 'North East Region Rail Development Fund (NERRDF). The NERRDF is to be funded to the tune of 25% through Railway Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) and balance 75% by Ministry of Finance as non-dividend additionally to GBS.

Air connectivity:

Ministry of Civil Aviation has laid down Route Dispersal Guidelines for scheduled airline operators to, inter-alia, ensure compulsory air-service between NER and rest of India and within NER. The North Eastern Council has been providing viability gap funding to Alliance Air for operating air services within the North Eastern Region since 2002. This is particularly meant for those airports of the NER that are not well connected by other commercial airlines. North Eastern Council also assists Airports Authority of India to strengthen the airports in the region. Greenfield airports are being constructed/proposed at Pakyong (Gangtok), Itanagar and Kohima.

Inland Waterways

River Brahmaputra from Dhubri to Sadiya has been declared as National Waterways-2 and IWL is developing it with Inland Waterways Transport infrastructure namely fairway, terminals and navigation aids. This waterway provides connectivity to NER with Kolkata and Haldia ports and thereby with the rest of the country, through specified waterways of Bangladesh for which an Inland and Water Transit and Trade Protocol exists between India and Bangladesh. The Government is also considering declaration of river Barak from Lakhimpur to Bhanga as a National Waterways and its development thereafter. This waterway is also connected with Kolkata and Haldia ports through the IWT protocol route of Bangladesh.

Additional funding for Infrastructure:

All 53 non-exempted line Ministries/Departments of Government of India, earmark atleast 10% of their annual budget, less allocation for externally aided schemes and local or event specific schemes/projects, for expenditure in the North Eastern Region. At the close of each financial year, the unutilized portion of their earmarked 10% budget allocation is pooled in the notional pool called Non-Lapsable Pool of Resources (NLCPR). The projects proposal received in the Annual priority list of the North Eastern States as per the instant guidelines of the NLCPR scheme are considered for retention and subsequent funding under the NLCPR scheme of this Ministry. The NLCPR scheme gets budgetary allocation every year from the NLCPR pool. The broad objective of the NLCPR scheme is to ensure speedy development of infrastructure in the North Eastern Region by increasing the flow of budgetary financing for new infrastructure projects/schemes. For the balanced development of the Region, the North Eastern Council, inter-alia, formulates specific infrastructure projects and schemes that benefit two or more States.